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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1626
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
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RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 4342
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2154
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2019
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2590
RHMFISS/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2929

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ASHGABAT 001287

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [SNAR](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: UN CENTER FOR PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY
CONTINUES WORK ON REGIONAL WATER ISSUES, PROMOTES CENTRAL
ASIAN SUPPORT FOR AFGHANISTAN

REF: A. ASHGABAT 1257

[1](#)B. ASHGABAT 1229

[1](#)C. ASHGABAT 1238

[1](#)D. ASHGABAT 1218

[1](#)E. ASHGABAT 1250

Classified By: Charge Sylvia Reed Curran for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: UN Center for Preventive Diplomacy Head of Office Miroslav Jenca believes that water issues will be less of a problem overall in Central Asia during the upcoming winter than it was for last winter. The international community is preparing to help Kyrgyzstan, which is likely to face water challenges. Jenca believe promoting infrastructure projects will help attract increased Central Asian support for Afghanistan. Turkmenistan has turned down an offer by UNODC for training, which is unusual given the country's preference for working with the UN as a partner. Perhaps the Turkmen have judged that the UN cannot provide the type of training they need. END SUMMARY.

WATER

[1](#)2. (C) UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy Head of Office Miroslav Jenca met with Charge September 25 to give an update of the Center's work. Jenca said he hopes to organize a meeting at the deputy foreign minister-level in Ashgabat later this fall. The agenda would cover 3-4 issues, and one chief topic would be regional water issues. He said the Central Asian countries need a lot of support to deal with water issues, but at the same time need to find their own solution. In addition, he hoped to arrange expert meetings on water that would look at documents dealing with regional water issues in other parts of the world.

[1](#)3. (C) Overall, Jenca believed that the countries are better prepared for this winter than they were for the 2007-2008 season. For example, Tajikistan's main dam was nearly full. With more water expected in October, it should be completely full this winter. Jenca said Kyrgyzstan does not have enough water (Ref A), but there are several options on how to address this problem. International Financial Institutions and the international community are already looking at how they can help Kyrgyzstan. Jenca said this assistance would

likely not just be limited to financial aid, but also include seeds and food. Furthermore, the EU during the recent ministerial on Central Asia in Paris made a clear commitment to Central Asia. The EU is exploring short-term solutions, but will also put efforts toward long-term solutions. Jenca said Uzbekistan is reluctant to discuss regional water issues. They have said that payments for water is a non-starter, because water is a renewable natural resource.

14. (C) Jenca expressed hopes for the November 17-18 conference on water in Central Asia in Almaty. UNDP will actively participate. The Preventive Diplomacy Center's role will be to help gather political support for both the conference and the projects that come out of it.

AFGHANISTAN

15. (C) The Center is actively working to attract increased Central Asian support for Afghanistan. He offered that one way to do this is through additional infrastructure projects. The Center is considering organizing an international event on this topic. It has also been organizing transboundary meetings between local mayors and elders in Turkmenistan and Afghanistan border areas. Jenca said this is "very sensitive," and so the Center has to "move slowly" on this project.

NARCOTRAFFICKING

16. (C) The Center is working with UNODC on border

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crime/border management issues. Jenca said that following a shootout in Ashgabat with a gang of purported narcotraffickers (Ref B), UNODC had offered to provide training and expertise to Turkmenistan's State Agency for Counter-narcotics. The State Agency, however, rebuffed the offer.

17. (C) COMMENT: It is interesting that despite President Berdimuhamedov's calls for increased training following the shootout (Ref C), the Turkmen turned down assistance from UNODC. Usually, the Turkmen are quite willing to work with the United Nations and often prefer it to other partners due to the country's official neutral status. Perhaps the Turkmen have judged that the UN cannot provide the type of training they need.

18. (C) COMMENT CONTINUED: The Center sees itself not just as a talk shop, but also as a facilitator. Jenca wisely takes into consideration the concerns of the various players, and the Center is likely to be more effective because of it. END COMMENT.
CURRAN